



LOW HANGING FRUIT

Acquiring a Second Language

By Jeannie Standal

When young children are learning to speak, they acquire language by interacting with their environments rather than with textbooks. Many of us, however, are learning a second language later than when we learned our first, and, unless we have become immersed in a new language and culture, we learn with a course. It's not easy, but it's so worth it!

While language acquisition is a complicated process, the benefits of learning a second language as a kid are pretty clear:

1. Learning a second language as a child is just easier than learning as an adult, so its best if we can become bilingual as kids.
2. According to researchers at Cornell, children who learn a second language can maintain attention despite distractions better than mono-lingual children.
3. Contrary to older schools of thought, learning a second language does not cause language confusion or a cognitive deficit.
4. Some research says that bilingual children are more creative and have better problem-solving skills than kids who have just one language.

What about those of us who are well past childhood? It is more difficult to do, but learning a second language can be a game changer:

1. A second language can provide a significant edge in career advancement.
2. People who are bilingual have more nimble brains. They often have better memories, problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, and are better at listening, multi-tasking, and concentrating.
3. Those who are bilingual or multilingual are better able to stave off cognitive decline that comes with age.
4. Knowing a second language makes travel, and work—or study—abroad opportunities more accessible.
5. Being bi— or multi-lingual improves vocabulary in one's first language.
6. Once you know two languages, learning three, four, or more becomes easier.

What's the downside of learning a second, third, or fourth language? There isn't one. Learning languages takes time, but it is time well-invested.

LINKS TO MORE LEARNING



[Stephen Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition](#)

An article that is a bit of a deep dive into Second Language acquisition.

<https://www.sk.com.br/sk-krash-english.html#:~:text=According%20to%20Krashen%20there%20are,they%20acquire%20their%20first%20language.>

[Language Acquisition: An Overview](#)

A lighter article on language acquisition from Colorin Colorado.

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/language-acquisition-overview>

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS



Create a Pronunciator Course Designer teacher account:

From the LiL.org homepage, navigate to the Pronunciator—Course Designer (for teachers) and authenticate with your zip code and city. Once in Course Designer, click on the Teachers Only: Launch Course Designer at the center of the screen. Create an account by entering the required information, and you will be sent an email with login credentials. After logging in, you will have access to all you need to design a course for your students.

DIGITAL TOOLS



Pronunciator

Provides both guided and self-directed instruction for 163 languages and ESL for 51 non-English languages, along with Course Designer, which allows for the creation and deployment of custom courses by educators. Courses can be created in any of the 163 languages that Pronunciator offers, or in more than 1,000 other languages. Visit LiL.org to find the Pronunciator tool that will work best for you!

LiL.org



